Note-Taking and Note-Making 2019
Presenter Lisa O’Sullivan
Note-Taking and Note-Making

Note-taking and note-making are both part of the learning process, but...

• How are they different?
  • What?
  • When?
  • Why?
  • How?
Note-Taking is different from Note-Making

**Note-Taking**

• Passive process for the purpose of recording information

• Occurs during lectures and tutorials

• Ensures you listen actively

• Assists recall of information

• Is often part of note-making

**Note-Making**

• Active process for the purpose of assimilation of information

• May occur during lectures and tutorials, when reading, preparing assignments and revising for exams

• Necessary to increase knowledge and understanding (**makes meaning**)

• Integrates note-taking from lectures and tutorials with reading to form consolidated notes for exam preparation
The Learning Process

1. **Record** – take notes in lectures and tutorials
2. **Review** lecture notes
3. **Refine** – make notes by integrating your lecture notes with reading from articles, prescribed and recommended textbooks
4. **Reduce** – summarise your notes for easy recall
5. **Recall** – recite what you know from your notes
6. **Reflect** – What do you know? What don’t you know? Strengths? Weaknesses?
Take Notes Effectively

Be prepared.

- familiarise yourself with the unit organisation and lecture style of the lecturer, complete the recommended reading, bring the necessary materials (paper, pens, laptop, etc.)

Listen actively.

- listen for repetition of key words and phrases, watch the board and/or screen, listen for introductory, concluding and transition words and phrases, listen for clues for what will be in the exam, use pictures and diagrams

Attend all lectures.

- especially the last lecture: it should contain information about the exam

Develop a note-taking method that works for you.

Note-taking and Note-Making University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
General Note-Taking Tips

1. Give yourself plenty of space.
2. Label, number and date all your notes.
3. Be methodical and organised.
4. Be selective – note key points only.
5. Use abbreviations.
6. Make your notes visual: use colour, pictures and diagrams.
7. If you get lost during the lecture, leave a space and a signal. Go back and fill it in later.
8. Flag ideas you are unsure about – note of any questions you have for follow-up.
9. Practise writing as neatly as possible.

Remember, the average lecturer speaks approximately 125-140 words per minute, and the average note-taker writes at a rate of about 25 words per minute.

(Glickman, n.d.)
Techniques for taking and making notes

There are a variety of note-taking and note-making techniques. Try a few and find out what suits you best. Some to consider include:

• mind maps
• the split page/Cornell method
• the outline system
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZJj6DwCqSU
Mind Maps

Advantages

- Visual
- Easy to take notes and add points
- Shows connections and relationships

Disadvantages

- Order/hierarchy may not be clear
- Can run out of space on the page
The Cornell Method

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_4f0ZukBeY
The Cornell Method

Page is divided into three sections:

- A left-hand margin in which to write key points and questions
- A wider right-hand section for writing the notes
- A horizontal section at the bottom of the page to summarise the topic.
The Cornell Method

Advantages
- Specifically designed for taking notes in lectures
- Organised
- Useful for making notes and revision

Disadvantages
- Not visual
- Easy to try to write too much
- Takes time to become proficient in using this method

(University of Sussex, n.d.)
The Outline Method

Use a numbering system and indentations to organise information.

- Main Topic 1
  - Sub-Topic
    - Related Points
    - Related Points
  - Main Topic 2
The Outline Method

Advantages
• Visual – Illustrates major points and supporting ideas

Disadvantages
• Easy to try to write too much
• Takes time to become proficient in using this method

(University of Sussex, n.d.)
Outline vs Cornell

Outline

Fall of the Roman Empire

I. A Century of Crisis
   A. Rome's Economy Weakens

   B. Military and Political Turmoil

II. Emperors Attempt Reform
   A. Diocletian Reformers the Empire

   B. Constantine Moves the Capital

Cornell Notes

Fall of the Roman Empire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Century of Crisis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Rome's Economy Weakens</td>
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<th>B. Military and Political Turmoil</th>
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<th>B. Constantine Moves the Capital</th>
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Summary:
Note-Taking Exercise

Using one of the methods outlined, take notes from the following video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAhRf3U50lM
Taking lecture notes is only the beginning of the **learning process**. Note-making is the next stage of the process and is necessary for making meaning and for understanding.

- **Record** – take notes in lectures and tutorials
- **Review** lecture notes
- **Refine** – make notes by integrating your lecture notes with readings from articles, prescribed and recommended textbooks
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Review your lecture notes

1. Read through your lecture notes.
2. Underline headings and subheadings and key words.
3. Correct spelling errors and rewrite illegible portions.
4. Fill in any gaps.
5. Underline or highlight important sentences or paragraphs.
6. Make sure you understand the concepts. (This might require some reading.)
Integrate your lecture notes and readings

1. **Refine** your lecture notes by incorporating your lecture notes with readings from required and recommended texts and articles.

2. Use your lecture notes as the basis of your integration.

3. **Reduce** – write summaries of your integrated notes for easy recall.


5. **Reflect** – What do you know? What don’t you know? What are your areas of strength? What areas are you weak in?
Note-Making Exercise

Using one of the methods outlined, make notes from the journal article provided.
Exercise

What do you know about note-taking and note-making?
Brainstorm or mind map your ideas.
Making notes for an assignment

When *reading* for an assignment *make notes and take the referencing details in an organised way*. It often helps to use an order that reflects your plan for writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Body para 1</td>
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For a literature review...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource with reference details</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Theories</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
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Summary

- Note-taking and note-making are both part of the learning process.
- Used for:
  - Promoting active listening
  - Promoting effective reading (reading with a purpose)
  - Increasing knowledge and understanding
  - Exam preparation
  - Assignment preparation
- Find a method that works for you. Consider mind maps, Cornell method and outline method.